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Reprinted from *Historical Papers*, published by the Trinity College Historical Society, Series XII.—1916

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METHODIST EXPANSION IN NORTH CAROLINA AFTER THE REVOLUTION *

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First of all, I wish to pay a tribute. Seven years ago at the meeting of this Society I listened with rapt attention to an address on "Some First Things in North Carolina Methodism." It stimulated my interest, already aroused by the speaker's first volume, and I went home to watch with eager expectation for the announcement of the second volume of his "History of Methodism in North Carolina." Alas! earth's mortality claimed Dr. Grissom before his work was completed. For years he searched the records, collected manuscripts, and travelled far and near—a veritable itinerant of Methodist history—in order to tell the story of his church's achievement in the state of his nativity. His method was so thorough and his perspective so well integrated in the general trend of American history, that his loss is felt by those interested in the social as well as the ecclesiastical history of North Carolina.

Of all this I have a peculiar sense. A general study of the political and social history of North Carolina from the close of the revolution to 1860 has led me to the question of religious development. For Methodism I have found no continuous guide, this being the period which would have been covered by Dr. Grissom's second volume. However, I take the liberty of presenting a general survey of religious movements from the close of the revolution through the first decade of the nineteenth century, with special reference to Methodism, with an earnest appeal for criticism as to facts and their interpretation and an earnest hope that some member of this society has already undertaken Dr. Grissom's unfinished task.

The Revolutionary War shattered the religious forces of North Carolina. Readjustment to a new regime was as much a problem for the churches as for industry, trade, and political thought. For this statistics bear witness. In 1790 the population of the state was 393,751, 50,000 of whom were

* An address before the North Carolina Conference Historical Society at Wilmington, N. C., Nov. 30, 1915.

heads of families. The exact proportion of church members cannot be ascertained, but 30,000 is a liberal estimate, leaving an uncultivated spiritual field of 363,751 souls. Yet the condition within the churches was not very favorable for the task before them. The Presbyterians had probably the largest membership. They were strongly intrenched in the piedmont and along the upper Cape Fear; but most of the loyalists in North Carolina were of Presbyterian stock and after the revolution many of the Scotch on the Cape Fear emigrated. In the piedmont section a number of the Presbyterian pastors had been active in the Revolutionary cause, notably Humphrey Hunter and Thomas McCaule, who served in the army; but for this very reason some of the congregations had declined. Moreover strict Calvinistic thought and discipline often leads to spiritual revolt; witness Rousseau in France, the English deists, and Benjamin Franklin in America. It is not strange, therefore, to find that in North Carolina the traditions of Calvinism were seriously questioned at the close of the war. "The pastors shed tears over departed worth," lost in battle, we are told, "but they grieved most over the living who had renounced the religion of their fathers, and embraced a cold skepticism that promised only a life of licentiousness and the vain hope of annihilation." The Baptists had the largest opportunity in North Carolina. They covered a greater territory than any other denomination, being grouped in two associations, the Kehukee in the east and the Sandy Creek in the piedmont, the latter being the third oldest association of Baptists in the United States. Their rapid growth in the South toward the middle of the eighteenth century was little less than a profound social movement. This extremely democratic organization fitted in well with the ideals of the plain people while the style of preaching and type of thought made a popular appeal. The Baptist membership in 1790 was 7,742, surpassed only by the Presbyterians who with the Independents had been estimated at 9,000 in 1762. But there were certain inherent weaknesses in the denomination. Individualism was too strongly intrenched in its polity for an organized diffusion of the faith; the Arminian doctrines so notable in the early days of the Sandy Creek Association had become dormant,

and there was a strong tendency toward dissensions over certain ordinances of the church.

So much for the two largest denominations in North Carolina. There were also the Quakers, well organized in some of the eastern and at least one of the piedmont counties; but they were a distinct social class rather than an aggressive denomination. The Moravians had a worthy and heroic history, but not until recent years have they sought an increase of membership. The progress of the Lutherans and German Reformed had been seriously checked by the interruption of intercourse with Europe during the war. Most significant was the condition of the Anglicans. Throughout the South the Church of England was prostrate. Among its communicants in North Carolina were a number of revolutionary leaders and its clergy were as a rule true to the patriot cause. But its tradition of close alliance with the British colonial system was a serious hindrance, there was no local episcopate, and early efforts to organize the diocese of North Carolina failed. In strong contrast to this condition of "suspended animation" in the South was the virility of the church in the North. There the support of the colonial government had never been so thorough; yet after the war bishops were elected and consecrated for the states of Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and New York and in 1785 the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church was organized.

Evidently there was an opportunity for a church that had an organization suitable for a distinct propaganda, that was free from doctrinal disputes, and that was thoroughly consecrated to some elemental Christian truth which would appeal to the people. In Methodism the hour and the opportunity met. The line of expansion seems to have been determined in quite a measure by the relative strength of the Anglicans. In 1783 eighty per cent of the Methodist membership was in the South, in 1800 sixty per cent, and in 1810 fifty-seven per cent; in other words, the new denomination took hold most rapidly in that section in which the Church of England was most prostrate.

Let us notice the role of North Carolina in the new movement. The Methodist pioneers made their appearance in

North Carolina in 1772. The prevalent opinion is that the growth of the societies was checked by the Revolution, that many of the British preachers returned to England, and that the native circuit riders were popularly regarded as loyal to the Crown to the injury of their cause. Such a conclusion is not in accord with the facts, so far as North Carolina is concerned. In 1776 the membership of the societies in the State was 683; by 1783, the year of the treaty of peace, it had risen to 2,229, and the number of circuits was then increased from four to ten. A step toward independence from the Church of England was taken in 1779, when the preachers of North Carolina and Virginia appointed a presbytery of three with power to ordain themselves, then others. Through the influence of Francis Asbury this action was disavowed until Mr. Wesley could be consulted. In 1784 consent was given and the Methodist societies took on the clothes of a church at Baltimore. The mechanism of the new denomination was well suited to the task before it. The bishops were the generals, the presiding elders the captains, the circuit riders the soldiers of the line. All were engaged in a spiritual warfare; in contrast to the call of the congregation in the Presbyterian and Baptist polities, they were *sent* to the people. Not since the days of the Jesuit fathers in the French northwest had this country seen such an aggressive projection of the Christian faith; hardly since the days of St. Francis had Christianity known a religious type similar to the circuit rider. Like the friars, he knew no place of abode, parsonages not being authorized until 1800. The meagre salary of sixty-four dollars made poverty truly evangelical and, with the views of Asbury, made marriage practically impossible for the majority. Like the mediaeval saints the circuit riders frequently ministered to the intellectual and physical, as well as to the more spiritual needs of the people. What was the attitude of mind, and what were the methods of work among these *fratres minores* who rode the circuits of North Carolina in the latter part of the eighteenth and the first decade of the nineteenth centuries? Shall we turn to the Journal of Francis Asbury, which mentions North Carolina seventy times? Asbury was the preëminent saint of his age, but he was a man of unusual ability, a high

officer, and the directing genius of the early campaign of the Methodist host. Let us turn in preference to the life and thought of the average circuit riders who never attained commanding prominence, yet performed a service as essential as that of the supreme officers. A few of them kept diaries, which next to prayer are the most intimate expression of the inner life. Some entries made by one who travelled circuits in Virginia and North Carolina from 1788 to 1797 are illuminating for our purpose.

First of all the diarist in question preached at nearly every resting place, holding usually two services. We are safe in estimating for him at least seven services a week, most of which were at private homes. He was never satisfied unless there was at each meeting some manifestation of Grace, either the conversion of the sinner or the rejoicing of the redeemed. To him the devil was a living person with whom he had conflicts as real as those of the early monks. "It was not many moments after," he writes of one meeting, "before I felt as if Hell received a reproof; the Lord Jesus appeared—his beautiful picture, his countenance ravished my heart, his presence made all within me rejoice." So intense was he on victory over Satan that exhaustion sometimes overtook him. "This," he writes, "is something that I cannot account for—when my strength of body fails, it cuts off my ideas short." Often when the diarist grieves that God is not with him, the reader realizes that physical infirmity is the real trouble. Given a few monasteries for occasional retreat, and among the early circuit riders would have arisen a group of religious writers comparable only to Thomas à Kempis, John Tauler, and William Law. Their lives and achievements, if they could be written, would make a veritable *Acta Sanctorum*.

Of particular interest was the diarist's reflections on slavery. At every opportunity he preached to the negroes; often they came in larger numbers by night than the whites by day. Whenever possible he argues with the masters concerning the wrongs of the institution. "If ever I get rich through slavery," he writes, "I shall esteem myself a traitor and claim a part in Hell with Judas, and the rich glutton." Again he says, "While the proud whites live in luxury and abomination making a

mock of God, and his word, the African upholds him by his swet and labor of his willing hands—and if they serve the Lord God it must be in the dead of night when they ought to be taking rest of their bodys. O, blood, blood, how awful it cryes up before God against my poor unjust professing Bro."

Once he witnessed the realities of oppression. Preaching one day, "the dear black people was filled with the power and spirit of God and began with a great Shout to give glory to God—this vexed the Devil. He entered into the cruel white men with violence who eagerly ran into the church with sticks and clubs and caines—abeating and abusing the poor slaves them outcast of man for praising God . . . a magistrate that has taken the oath was the instigator of it . . . with bitter oaths and gnashing of teeth he put up a prayer that we the preachers was all in Some Misearable Infernal Place. . . I think if ever I saw happy people it was today under persecution. O the tears, screams, crys and groans for the wicked it was awful. I looked out the window while I stood at the desk and behold; a poor black bro. lucked me in the face, with bursting grief tears of blood, rolling down his bruised face, and cryed this is what I have for praising my dear Jesus. . . It reached my poor heart, I beged him to bare it for Christ Sake, he would soon (if he was faithful) be out of reach of their clubs—O how can I rest when I see my bro unhumanely treated. O America, America; blood and oppression will be thy overthrow."

For years the diarist presented the cause of Christ with all his strength; then his itinerating days ended in the year 1797, not with death, but matrimony. But the rejoicing of the bridegroom could not be dissociated from some manifestation of Grace. On his wedding night he made this entry:

Monday, June 5. Many are my afflictions but I hope out of them God will deliver me. This blessed night about nine o'clock I was united in wedlock to Miss Polly Seward, daughter of John Seward, of Brunswick, state of Virginia, by the Rev. John Easter. I think God has owned this union which was sealed with the solemn ceremony. Bro. W. Spencer, whom I called Jonathan, was so kind as to give me his company and attendance. We had sweet prayer and thanksgiving together unto the blessed Lord. I thank God we had an answer to prayer. Many shouts were sent up to Heaven. It was a

solemn time with me, may the Lord bless us, and give us the sweet guidance of his Holy Spirit."

James Meacham, from whom I have quoted, was not the only circuit rider in North Carolina.* In 1783 there were on the North Carolina circuits eighteen preachers; by 1800 there were twenty-seven. Co-operating with them were a large number of local preachers, estimated by Jesse Lee in 1800 at 150. The work of the pioneers was not limited to preaching the gospel. They wielded an intellectual influence. Sometime between 1780 and 1790 Cokesbury School was established on the Yadkin, the first preparatory school in America under Methodist control. A few years after the Revolution Sunday schools were introduced for the purpose of instruction in the elementary branches, and the Conference of 1790 declared, "Let us labor, as the heart and soul of one man, to establish Sunday schools in or near the place of public worship. Let persons be appointed by the bishops, elders, deacons or preachers to teach (gratis) all that will attend and have a capacity to learn; from six o'clock in the morning till ten, and from two 'clock in the afternoon till six; where it does not interfere with public worship. The Council shall compile a proper school book, to teach them learning and piety." Just when the Methodist Sunday school appeared in North Carolina and how extensively the institution was used, I have not been able to learn. In Virginia the first Sunday school was organized in 1786, in South Carolina, in 1787. The circuit riders had still another intellectual influence. When the Methodist publishing house was organized they scattered its books and tracts throughout North Carolina. It is a matter of record that the Discipline of 1786 and also the first number of the *Arminian Magazine* were prepared for the press in North Carolina, the former by John Dickins on the Bertie Circuit, the latter by Coke and Asbury in 1789.

Nor were the Presbyterians and Baptists inactive. In 1788 the Synod of the Carolinas was organized, and the Presbyterian divines busied themselves in combating skepticism, restoring Sabbath observance, and holding short seasons of fasting and prayer in their churches twice a year. Long be-

* See *Diary and Travel of James Meacham* in Historical Papers, Series IX and X.

fore the camp meeting came into vogue, tents or stands for use of the minister in out-of-door preaching were common among the Presbyterian congregations. By the Baptists five new associations were organized, three in the west, the Yadkin (1790), Mayo (1798), and Mountain (1799), and two in the east, Tar River (1794), and Flat River (1794). Thus the period from 1783 to 1800 was one of preparation, characterized by a gradual extension of the churches into fields hitherto unoccupied and by denominational reorganization. The result was a rich harvest, ushered in by a great revival which began in 1801 and lasted for a decade. Baptist traditions regard it as a reflex of the great revival contemporary in the west, while good Presbyterian authority claims that it began in Orange County as the result of prayer meetings conducted by the wife of Dr. David Caldwell. With the Methodists the genesis of the revival undoubtedly was the Conference of 1800 which met in Baltimore. It closed with a distinct manifestation of Grace and the preachers carried the flame of evangelism to the most distant circuits. In North Carolina the revival started in the western counties, thence spread to the Cape Fear, then the coast and the Albemarle section, and culminated in a meeting at Raleigh, 1811. Here was a movement of epochal importance in our religious history. Let us notice some of its characteristics.

First of all there was co-operation on the part of the Methodists, the Presbyterians and the Baptists. The means of reaching the people was the camp meeting. Its origin dates from 1789 or 1790, when it was used in the western counties by John McGee and Daniel Asbury, and later was introduced by McGee into Tennessee and Kentucky. With the revival it became the most prominent means of carrying the gospel to the masses. The numbers attending were estimated by the thousands. From all accounts the results were greater in the piedmont than in the Cape Fear section. To a large degree this may be attributed to racial influences. In the western counties the population was largely Scotch-Irish. These people were exiles in a double sense. In the migration from Scotland to Ireland much of the discipline of the kirk was lost. The English Church was established in Ireland and the govern-

ment opposed any other form of Protestantism. Hence under great difficulties did the Presbyterian church in Ireland maintain its existence. Moreover, the early years of the Scotch in Ireland were years of conflict with rugged nature. Cabins were built, fields were cleared in face of opposition by the native Irish and the beasts of the forest. Thus for a time physical wants stood first. These facts, the frontier life and the policy of the English government, were the background for a new kind of religious experience which came about 1625, a wave of revivals conducted by missionaries, not in churches, but in the cabins of the settlers, the first form of prayer meeting. A century later the Scotch-Irish emigrated to America. Again the task of the first years was a conflict with nature, clearing the forest and establishing homes. The outlook for fruitful life was better than in Ireland; the hearts of the pepole were softened by the greater degree of liberty and old prejudices relaxed. The result was the revival of 1755 in the Piedmont section, let by Strubal Stearns, the Baptist missionary from New England, and the still greater revival of 1801.

On the other hand the experience of the Scotch Highlanders had been different. In Scotland the kirk was established and the chief religious interest was to defend it from criticism by the Anglicans. Hence the Scotch divines excelled in the philosophy of religion, the defense of traditional thought and forms of worship. Consequently neither in Scotland nor among the Scotch in America were Methodism or revivals very popular. Let me illustrate by two Presbyterian clergymen in North Carolina. Dr. David Caldwell, Scotch-Irish minister, educator and politician, welcomed the revival of 1801 as a special manifestation of Grace; likewise one of his congregations, the church at Alamance. Not so another of his congregations, the church at Buffalo. Alamance went so far as to adopt the evangelical hymns of Isaac Watts but Buffalo continued the old custom of singing the psalms. In strong contrast to Dr. Caldwell was Samuel MacCorkle, a Scotch minister. At first he was extremely doubtful of the value of the great wave of evangelism. At Caldwell's special invitation he attended a camp meeting in Randolph County. He was shocked by the scenes. "Is it possible, said I, that this scene

of seeming confusion can come from the spirit of God? Can He who called light from darkness, and order from confusion, educe light and order from such a dark mental and moral chaos?" Toward the close of the meeting, while still in doubt as to the efficacy of the revival, he was called to his own son, who was under conviction of sin. While praying over him the good dominie's interest widened to the whole world of sinners, his doubts of the value of revivals were dispelled, and he himself became active in camp meetings.

What has this attitude of the Presbyterians toward revivals to do with Methodism? Everything; the Calvinistic forces, both Presbyterian and Baptist, were divided as to the value and advisability of this method of propaganda. The Methodists were not divided, their Arminian doctrine made them unanimous, and hence in the end they reaped a greater harvest. By 1810 they had outstripped other denominations in point of numbers.

The phase of the revival that attracted most attention was the physical expression of emotion. Such religious exercises as falling or the jerks, dancing, barking, laughing, and singing were common. Such phenomena had characterized the previous revivals in Ireland and the piedmont section. They were most common among the Scotch-Irish. Most of our accounts are from Presbyterian sources. Typical were the scenes at a camp meeting held in Rutherford County in 1802 by Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists:

> There was a powerful work among the people, such as had never been witnessed before in this part of the country. Many were astonished beyond measure, and appeared to be frightened almost to death. They would fall sometimes, under preaching, their whole length on the ground, and with such suddenness and violence as seemed almost enough to kill them. Some of my neighbors fell at my feet like men shot in battle. This the people called being "struck down," and when they professed religion, they called that "coming through."
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> One of the most mysterious exercises among the people was what was called the jerks. I saw numbers exercised in this way at a camp-meeting held in Lincoln County. Sometimes their heads would be jerked backward and forward with such violence that it would cause them to utter involuntarily a sharp, quick sound similar to the yelp of a dog; and the hair of the women to crack like a whip. Sometimes

their arms, with clenched fists, would be jerked in alternate directions with such force as seemed sufficient almost to separate them from the body. Sometimes all their limbs would be affected, and they would be thrown into almost every imaginable position, and it was as impossible to hold them still almost as to hold a wild horse. When a woman was exercised in this way, other women would join hands around her and keep her within the circle they formed; but the men were left without constraint to jerk at large through the congregation, over benches, over logs, and even over fences. I have seen persons exercised in such a way that they would go all over the floor with a quick, dancing motion, and with such rapidity that their feet would rattle upon the floor like drum-sticks.

Some of the Presbyterians got into some extremes and brought a reproach upon the good work. They got into what they called the dancing exercise, the marrying exercise, etc. Sometimes a whole set of them would get together and begin dancing about at a most extravagant rate. Sometimes they would be exercised about getting married, and one would tell another he or she had a particular revelation that they must be married, and if the one thus addressed did not consent, he or she must expect to be damned. Thus many got married, and it was said some old maids, who had nearly gotten antiquated, managed in this way to get husbands. But this was condemned by the more sober part among Presbyterians and Methodists, and it has now nearly subsided.*

In the light of such scenes it is not strange to hear that Methodist ministers were sometimes arrested or assaulted and that one husband applied a mustard plaster to his wife to cure her of Methodism. Experience with human souls in the camp meeting often brought with it an unusual knowledge of the mind and its operations. Sometimes the circuit riders utilized this knowledge for the cure of mental ailments. An example occurred in Wilmington in 1815. Joseph Travis was pastor of the Methodist Church. Among the residents of the town was an ex-governor of the state. One day he asked Travis to call on his wife who for some time had been treated by physicians for some mental disturbance. Hear Travis' account of the interview and its results:

Calling on the lady he found that "her head had been shaved and blistered, and I know not what besides had been tried, to restore her mind to a proper balance. Yet withal, she apparently grew worse. I told her that at the request of her husband, I had called to see her. She immediately commenced relating to me her deplorable insanity, and the cause leading thereunto; namely, a confusion of mind which

* David Gray, quoted from Shipp, Methodism in South Carolina, p. 273.

suddenly seized her one day; and withal that her greatest grief was that she was not prepared for death. I endeavored to convince her that she was not deranged, assuring her that a deranged person was not conscious of any abberration of mind. I pretty well convinced her of the fact and then proceeded to point her desponding and sin-smitten soul to the great atonement made for sinners by the death and resurrection of Christ. I conversed with her for a half hour or so, prayed with her, and left her. In a day or two afterwards, a carriage drove up to the parsonage. I stepped out, and who should it be but Mrs. Smith. I helped her out of the carriage and with weeping eyes as she entered the parsonage, she exclaimed, "O Sir! you have done me more good than all the doctors put together. You directed me to Jesus. I went to him by faith, and humble confidence and prayer. He has healed me, soul and body; I feel quite happy.*

In the eastern counties the outlook for converts to Methodism was different than in the west. There was a large negro population, and the whites were mainly of English rather than Scotch-Irish extraction. In those counties that had a large colored element in their population Methodism seems to have made a stronger appeal to the negroes than the whites. The first white convert in Fayetteville was baptized in 1802 although for some time there had been a large negro congregation, organized by Henry Evans, a free negro preacher. In Wilmington in 1802 the white membership was 48, the negro 231; in 1812 the figures were 94 white and 704 colored. In the Albemarle section the Methodist movement received the cooperation of the Anglicans. For this Reverend Charles Pettigrew was largely responsible. In vain he had labored to organize the surviving elements of the Church of England into a diocese. In fact he was elected Bishop of North Carolina in 1794 but was never consecrated. Realizing the futility of his efforts, he turned to Methodism as the best hope for religion. At his home he entertained the circuit riders, at the chapel on his plantation near Edenton they preached, and until 1839 Pettigrew's Chapel was a regular appointment on the Columbia Circuit.

The culmination of the evangelistic wave was reached in a meeting at Raleigh. There the Virginia Conference met in 1811. Its sessions were held in the State House because the small Methodist congregation had no building. Asbury was

* Autobiography of Joseph Travis, p. 80.

present, so were McKendree, Jesse Lee and other pioneers of Methodism. Guided by their preaching about fifty professed Christ, among whom was William Hill, Secretary of State from 1811 to 1859. The immediate result was the construction of a church, the direct antecedent of Edenton Street. Among the witnesses of the revival was William Glendenning, one of the original Methodist preachers in America. In 1785 he left the new denomination, dissatisfied with its form of government, joined O'Kelly's Republican Methodist Church; by 1811 he had become an Unitarian and pastor of the only church building in Raleigh. He welcomed his old associates and took a keen interest in the revival but frequently exclaimed, "I do not like the government, I do not like the government." It is very significant that the streams of Unitarianism and Methodism should have met in Raleigh. The town was the capital of the state and in political circles there was a well-defined revolt against religious traditions. Now Unitarianism stood for intellectual revolt in religion and Methodism for a moral revolt; both were for their day and time radical movements, directed against a wall of mental and moral conservatism. If the first church in the new capital was Unitarian, the second was Methodist, and the revival stimulated other denominations into life, for in a few years churches were built by Baptists, Presbyterians and the Episcopalians.

No review of the religious movement in North Carolina in the quarter century after the revolution would be complete without some consideration of its influence on the life of the people. Of this it is unfortunately difficult to make an estimate. Most of our church history consists of the biography of clergymen, outlines of theological controversies and the defense of institutions of the church to the neglect of the life and work of the laity. Moreover, as all the churches in North Carolina were growing or making efforts toward better organization of their forces in the period under consideration, it is very difficult to differentiate the religious influence of one denomination from that of another. Truly there is more likeness than dissimilarity among the children of God. Yet with due regard to these difficulties, certain conclusions are warranted.

First of all, the reality of religion was brought home to the people, principally by the revival of 1801. Now the latter half of the eighteenth century was preëminently an age of free thinking. Skepticism was then aggressive, scoffing, irreligious and irreverent, and such it remained until the scientific movement of the nineteenth century gave free thought, sound facts, a method, and a task. Now the skepticism of the older type existed among the intellectual class in North Carolina, and the uncultivated copied their betters and swaggered about unbelief. Churches had not been too numerous either in country or towns, and the cause of religion had not been very extensively or very thoroughly presented prior to the Revolution. The great revival, therefore, marks healthy reaction, an awakening of the people to the reality of the religious element in life. The conversion of the infidel was a common event. Typical is the following account by James Jenkins. Writing in 1802 of a meeting in the Waxhaws he says: "One among many remarkable cases I will relate of a professed atheist who fell to the earth and sent for brother Gassaway to pray for him. After laboring in the pangs of the new birth for some time, the Lord gave him deliverance. He then confessed before hundreds that for some years he had not believed there was a God now found him gracious to his soul." The reaction from infidelity probably explains in some measure the religious exercises and visions, phenomena which do not occur today because the claims of religion are familiar to us from early youth. People in the present generation are not less religious but more normal in the expression of their convictions.

Out of the religious movement came a demand for moral reform. Illustrative was a new attitude toward alcohol. Every gentleman had his private distillery, the leading politician of North Carolina is said to have kept a bucket of corn whiskey at his front door, and the manufacture and peddling of liquors was an industry as common as raising cotton or tobacco. Yet in the Methodist Conference minutes of 1783 we find the following question and answer:

Q.—"Should our friends be permitted to make spirituous liquors, sell, and drink them in drams?"

A.—"By no means; in that it is wrong in its nature and consequences, and desire all our preachers to teach the people by precept and example to put away the evil."

So far as I have been able to find this is the genesis of the prohibition movement in the South. Later local preachers were prohibited under penalty to distill or retail spirituous liquors. However, the issue was injected into politics by the Baptists when in 1817 the following resolutions were adopted by the Sandy Creek Association:

Whereas, this association views with concern and regret the custom existing among candidates for public posts of honor and profit, of distributing spirituous liquors among the people, in order to enhance their own popularity, and influence the suffrages of their fellow citizens at elections; and whereas such a custom is both ruinous to the morals and happiness of the people, and dangerous to their civil rights and liberties.

1. Resolved unanimously, That a person be appointed to prepare a memorial to be presented to the next meeting of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, praying them to enact a law against this degrading evil.

2. Resolved, That it be recommended to the churches of this association to refuse their support to any candidate who shall, either himself or by another person distribute spirituous liquors with a view to conciliate the affections of the people.

3. Resolved, That this association concur with their brethren of the Flat River Association, in inviting all professing Christians, and lovers of the good order and morality, to lend their decided co-operation to avert the evils which this custom entails upon us.

4. Agreed that Brother George Dismukes wait upon the legislature with the memorial of this body."

The great revival deeply influenced the various denominations. Increase of membership made possible more compact church organization. In 1803 the Lutheran synod of North Carolina was formed. In 1813 the Presbyterian churches withdrew from the Synod of the Carolinas and organized the Synod of North Carolina. In 1817 the Episcopalians organized the Diocese of North Carolina, with three clergymen and less than 200 laity. John Stark Ravenscroft was elected Bishop and at the end of his episcopolate in 1830 there were eleven clergymen and 650 lay members.

Of all churches the Baptist was most profoundly affected. Two issues, the direct result of the revival, convulsed the denomination. One was that of missions. In 1805 the Philanthropic Baptist Missionary Society was organized, the first Baptist society for missions in the United States, followed in 1814 by the North Carolina Baptist Society for Foreign Missions, the former acting through the association, the latter through individuals. In 1817 the contributions of the North Carolina Baptists for missions surpassed those of any other state, except Massachusetts. However the cause of home missions overshadowed that of foreign missions. A second movement was for closer relationship between the associations, resulting in the Baptist General Meeting of Correspondence of 1812. In 1821 the Philanthropic Society and the General Meeting were merged into the North Carolina Baptist Missionary Society, with salaried officers and the purpose of developing systematic benevolence. Undoubtedly the increasing importance of domestic over foreign missions and the attempt at cooperation among the associations were due to competition of the Methodists, who by 1810 had passed the Baptists in numbers. But the movements were bitterly opposed. The spirit of individualism was so strongly rooted that there was fear of any semblance of authority beyond the local church. Moreover, the rigid Calvinistic element criticized the organized propaganda for missions as a diversion from God's plans. Much bitterness was engendered. When the party of progress organized the Baptist State Convention in 1831, three of the older associations repudiated the movement and the spirit of schism split many of the churches.

Nor was the problem of organization confined to the Baptists. Considerable dissatisfaction pervaded the Methodists. In the early days of the church there was discontent with the episcopacy. Joseph Pilmoor, the first Methodist preacher in North Carolina, never left the Church of England. William Meredith, who introduced Methodism into Wilmington, lived and died a Primitive Methodist. Glendenning, as we have seen, became a Unitarian, and Parson Miller, of Rowan County, never left the Church of England; indeed, he helped to establish the Diocese of North Carolina.

The leader of the earlier dicontent was James O'Kelley, a native of Ireland, who spent his later years in Chatham County, North Carolina. When the motion to allow the itinerant to appeal from the Bishop to the Conference in the matter of his appointment was rejected in 1792, O'Kelley withdrew and soon organized the Republican Methodist Church, now the Christian Church. Another period of discontent opened after the great revival. On account of the small salary of the itinerant, there was a host of local preachers who retired from the ranks in order to support their families. They particpated in the camp meetings and the revivals, and demanded recognition in the councils of the church. In 1820 the General Conference allowed them to organize district conferences, the chairmen of which were the presiding elders. This concession was not enough; in 1821 the Roanoke District Conference of Local Preachers sent to similar bodies and also to the Virginia Conference a protest against rules for their government made by a general conference in which they were not represented, and a petition for representation was sent up to the General Conference of 1824. From other states were also sent petitions for lay representation. When these were rejected, "union societies" were organized to agitate for reform, the second society in the movement being the Roanoke Union Society, organized in Halifax County, Nov. 3, 1824. A little later the Granville Union was formed on the Tar River Circuit. The policy of the itinerants and presiding elders toward the movement for reform was drastic. Accusing members of the unions of inveighing against the discipline and sowing dissensions, they frequently expelled them from the churches. When a second appeal for reform to the General Conference of 1828 was rejected, a new denomination was launched, the Associated Methodist Churches, later the Methodist Protestant Church; the first annual conference of the new movement was organized in North Carolina in December, 1828.

These revolts were safety valves for discontent. They did not impede the growth of the Methodist Episcipal Church which continued to surpass other denominations in point of numbers. Let us inquire in conclusion if Methodism made

any distinct contribution to religious life and thought in North Carolina. Undoubtedly it did. That contribution did not spring from its superior organization or methods of work but from its doctrine and the attitude of mind arising from it. Of the denominations that made a distinct appeal to the masses, Methodism alone was Arminian, the Baptists and Presbyterians being Calvinistic. The important of this doctrinal cleavage is realized when we contrast certain by-products. Granted the theory of predestination, it inevitably follows that the elect of God are differentiated from the rest of humanity. Moreover the interests of the elect can not be confined to matters purely spiritual. Their voice should be heard in political and social affairs. It is not strange therefore to find Calvinistic ministers taking a leading part in political conventions, preaching on the merits of the federal constitution, serving in the legislature and the halls of Congress. The Calvinistic congregation was a force to be reckoned with in matters of politics and government. Moreover the elect of God must eat and drink; should they not patronize the merchant of their own denomination? Their children had to be educated; should they not be sent to the school conducted by one of the elect? Calvinism produced a corporate spirit from which sprang a denominational influence in politics and education.

In strong contrast is the by-product of Arminianism. If the will is free to accept Christ, Christians cannot be set apart from the rest of humanity in one group or a number of groups; religious values spring from private judgment, the acceptance of Christ by man, rather than the choice of God manifested through certain ordinances or church membership. The spirit of Methodism is, therefore, individualistic. The corporate spirit is almost entirely lacking, and its chief product is a liberal attitude toward all men. Before the Methodist laymen will patronize the Methodist merchant or the Methodist school, he must be shown that these are just as good as any others that can be found elsewhere. Rarely have the preachers exercised a political influence, as in the case of the Calvinistic clergy. Moreover as salvation is open to all, Methodism may use in carrying out its purposes professors of

Christ of any denomination whatsoever. This liberality toward men and human agencies has been the distinct contribution of Methodism to religious life and thought in North Carolina. May it never diminish but increase in influence as the years go by.

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